

the temple first came out to make an estimate, and then the master appeared to see them. The thieves were petrified with terror. Out of mercy he did not punish them, but rather made a Buddha image to be consecrated in the pagoda and performed rites of dedication. Later he lived by the seaside, and preached to passersby. He passed away when he was over eighty.

Even an animal does not forget gratitude, and repays an act of kindness. How, then, could a righteous man<sup>19</sup> fail to have a sense of gratitude?

## 8

### *On a Deaf Man Whose Hearing Was Restored Immediately Owing to His Faith in a Mahayana Scripture<sup>1</sup>*

In the reign of the empress residing at the Palace of Owarida<sup>2</sup> there was a man whose name was Kinunui no tomonomiyatsuko Gitsū 衣縫伴造義通<sup>3</sup> who suddenly became seriously ill. He was deaf in both ears and suffered a chronic skin disease which never healed. He said to himself, "My past deeds<sup>4</sup> influence my life not only in the present but also in the future. It is better to do good and die soon than to live long and be hated by others." Therefore he swept the ground, cleaned the hall, summoned a *dhyāna* master<sup>5</sup> with all due reverence, and, after purifying himself with holy water,<sup>6</sup> devoted himself to reading a Mahayana scripture 方廣經.<sup>7</sup>

Meanwhile, he experienced an extraordinary sensation and said to the master, "I am hearing the name of a bodhisattva in my ear, so I beg you, Most Venerable Master,<sup>8</sup> to continue the service." During

19. 義人 *ginin*.

1. Cf. *Sanbō ekotoba* (II, 5), *Fusō ryakki* (IV, Suiko), *Konjaku monogatari* (XIV, 36), etc.

2. Refers to Empress Suiko; see I.6, n. 3.

3. According to the *Shinsen shōjiroku*, Kinunui is the name of an immigrant family.

4. 宿業 *sukugō* or *shukugō*; the term is ethically neutral, including both good and evil deeds, but it usually refers to evil deeds.

5. 義禪師 *Gi-zenji* may be a combination of a personal name *Gi* and *zenji*, an honorific title, or a monk who is well-read in scriptures.

6. 香水 *kōzui*, ritually purified water.

7. *Hōkō-kyō*; 方廣 *hōkō* is a shortened compound of 方正 *hōsei*, "square, upright," and 廣大 *kōdai*, "large, great"; hence, in the Buddhist tradition it designates Mahayana. Therefore, *Hōkō-kyō* means Mahayana scripture; for another possible meaning, however, see Chap. II(1)a, n. 8.

8. 大德 *daitoku*; see I.5, n. 43.

the master's performance, one ear was completely healed. With great joy, Gitsū repeated his request to go on, and, as the master went on with the service, both ears were healed. People far and near marveled at the news. We learn that there really exists a mysterious correspondence.<sup>9</sup>

## 9

### *On the Reunion in a Foreign Land of a Father with His Child Who Was Carried Away by an Eagle*

In the third month, in the spring of the tenth year of the hare, in the reign of the empress who resided in the Palace of Itabuki, Asuka Kawara 飛鳥川原板葺宮,<sup>2</sup> there was a baby girl in a certain home in a remote village in Shizumi district of Tajima province 但馬國七美郡.<sup>3</sup> While she was crawling in the courtyard, an eagle seized her and carried her high into the sky toward the east. Her parents, lamenting, grieving, and wailing, ran in the direction the eagle had gone, but could not find it. Therefore, they held a memorial service for her.<sup>4</sup>

Eight years passed. At the end of the eighth month, in the autumn of the seventh year of the dog, in the reign of the emperor who resided at the Palace of Nagara-no-Toyosaki in Naniwa 難破長柄豊前宮,<sup>5</sup> her father happened to lodge for the night in Kasa district, Tanba province 丹波國加佐郡.<sup>6</sup> Wishing to wash his feet, he accompanied his host's daughter who had been sent to the village well to get water. Around the well there were some village girls who snatched away the daughter's pail and would not allow her to draw water. They joined together to bully her, saying, "You, who were not eaten by the eagle, why don't you have any manners!" They shouted all kinds of abusive remarks and hit her, so that she came home crying. The host<sup>7</sup> asked, "Why are you crying?" Whereupon the traveller told him what he

9. 感應 *kannō* means a mysterious correspondence between Buddhas and all sentient beings. Every prayer or vow addressed to Buddha elicits a response owing to the unity of existence. See Chap. II(3)b, n. 147.

1. Cf. *Fusō ryakki* (IV, Kōgyoku), *Konjaku monogatari* (XXVI, 1), *Mizukagami* (II, Kōgyoku), etc. A similar plot is found in the legend on Rōben 良辨 (689–773), the charismatic founder of Tōdai-ji. See II.21; Yanagita, "Densetsu," *Teihon Yanagita Kunio shū*, V, 88–90.

2. Empress Kōgyoku (642–645), whose palace was situated in present Asuka-mura, Takechi-gun, Nara-ken. This event took place in 643.

3. Present Mikata-gun, Hyōgo-ken 兵庫縣美方郡.

4. 修福 *shūfuku*; holding a Buddhist service on a person's behalf to store up merit for his well-being in the other world.

5. Emperor Kōtoku (645–654), whose palace was situated at present Ōsaka-shi.

6. The coastal area of the Maizuru Bay